

Special Meeting of the Board of Library Trustees
Tuesday, July 12, 2005 - Library Board Room
02:30 PM - 04:15 PM

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Board of Library Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as Authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

Board Members Present: Chairperson: Tim Douglas, Vice-Chairperson: Alan Kemble, Faye Hill, Judith Wiseman, David Edelstein

Board Members Absent:

Library Staff: Pamela Kiesner; Gayle Helgoe; Gladys Fullford; Scott Blume

Others: John Watts, City Council Liaison

Strategic Planning Work Session: Pam asked about the funds put aside through the City Center Master Plan, and learned the money is no longer there. Pam shared an article by Tom Hennen, who does the HAPLR scoring. His article is about the concept of library impact fees being implemented in some communities in the nation. Pam reported on information about two previous Bellingham Library bonds. The bond for the Fairhaven Branch was unsuccessful in 1970. A list of committee members was included with the successful bond issue in 1980.

Pam, Tim and David met with Dewey Desler and Pete Kremen. Dewey and Pete are supportive of the libraries. The County is reviewing their future needs. They want to bring all their services under one roof instead of being spread out. Their perception is that they will have a need for all their property. They are five years off before making decisions on developing their most prime property, the parking lot. Pete and Dewey would like to see a joint city center master plan.

David's observation is to pause and make a solid case for a central library rather than both a central library and a branch library. Using Pete's concept, build it multi-story, an economically viable building. The Board has talked about having a branch presence, not necessarily a full service branch library at this time. He suggested that when the time is right, we may need fund raising help from neighborhood groups.

The Board expressed a desire to see an architectural vision of what could be possible on the central library site. Alan suggested asking the R/UDAT Group, because of their previous work with the library, what they would envision while maintaining very usable open space. John suggested another name, a "green" architect, Chris Morgan.

Judith said the geotechnical report did not answer her specific question of how much will it cost to build a foundation without parking. Alan suggested writing a letter to ask for the answer.

Gayle spoke to the issue of a library presence in Barkley. The established book returns at the Hagen Stores around Bellingham are popular, especially at Barkley. Perhaps that presence could be increased to pick up and drop off with minimal staff involvement. Professional librarians could be available by phone. Possibilities of private/public partnerships include low-income housing grants, civic or city funds, neighborhood development groups, multiple partners, and a retail multi-use facility. Gayle's findings show that on-going costs at malls may not be as high because the mall provides security and utilities. Partnerships with other agencies are formed when the building is leased out for offices. A children's museum with a library branch enhances activities and exhibits. Pam pointed out that nearly any partnership is possible if you find willing entities. Partnerships with schools in rural areas have worked well in some instances.

Pam shared an idea that staff member Jane Lowrey is excited about: To plan in a new library an “Information Court” like a “Food Court.” This could be an informational district with resource offices in the library facility.

Pam asked Myron Carlson, Facilities Manager, about painting the building. Facilities will include the library in a five year maintenance plan which will begin in 2007. We all have a question regarding spending money on painting the building before a bond election, yet the building requires some maintenance. We could look at cleaning rather than painting. The carpeting upstairs is the original 1984 carpet. Some areas may need replacement because of safety concerns.

Next Regular Library Board Meeting – July 19, 2005 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Next Special Library Board Meeting – August 9, 2005 will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees